

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2672

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 1749

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, TU, CY, GW

SUBJ: CYPRUS AND TURKISH DOMESTIC POLITICS

REF: A. BONN 3494, B. ANKARA 1000

1. IN VERY USEFUL TELEGRAM FROM BONN (REF. A) WE WERE STRUCK BY GEHLHOFF'S STATEMENT THAT DEFMIN LEBER DURING HIS VISIT HERE WAS TOLD THAT THE TURKISH GENERAL STAFF (TGS) HAD IMPOSED AGREEMENT ON ALL POLITICAL PARTIES NOT TO ATTEMPT TO CAPITALIZE POLITICALLY ON WHATEVER CONCESSIONS MIGHT BE GIVEN BY PRIMIN DEMIREL IN REACHING CYPRUS SETTLEMENT. WE BELIEVE TGS WASN'T RESOLUTION OF THE CYPRUS PROBLEM WHICH WOULD ALLOW THEM TO WITHDRAW THE APPROXIMATELY 30,000 MAN TURKISH FORCE FROM CYPRUS. WE ALSO BELIEVE THE TGS HAS MADE THIS DESIRE KNOWN TO THE DEMIREL GOVERNMENT. WE DOUBT, HOWEVER, THAT THE TGS HAS THE ABILITY TO STOP THE PARTIES FROM MAKING THE TERMS OF A CYPRUS SETTLEMENT A POLITICAL ISSUE.

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2. THE MILITARY IS AN IMPORTANT INSTITUTION IN TURKEY AND IS GENERALLY HELD ABOVE CRITICISM BY THE POLITICAL PARTIES. IT HAS THE POWER--IN FACT IF NOT IN LAW--TO INTERVENE BOTH DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS. HOWEVER, ITS POWER TO SUPPRESS CRITICISM OF WHAT MANY TURKS WOULD CONSIDER AN ANTI-NATIONALIST ACTION (I.E.MAKING CONCESSIONS ON CYPRUS SUFFICIENT FOR A SETTLEMENT) WOULD, IN OUR VIEW, BE SEVERELY LIMITED. AN EXAMPLE OF THE MILITARY'S INABILITY SHORT OF DIRECT INTERVENTION TO INFLUENCE DOMESTIC POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IS THE REPEATED STATEMENTS BY TGS CHIEF SANCAR OVER RECENT MONTHS CALLING FOR AN END TO STUDENT VIOLENCE. SANCAR'S STATEMENTS HAVE HAD NO VISIBLE EFFECT ON THE GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS, THE LEVEL OF IRRESPONSIBLE AND INFLAMMATORY POLITICAL RHETORIC, OR THE ACTIONS OF THE STUDENTS.

3. MOREOVER, WE HAVE NOT IN OUR CONTACTS WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL PARTIES RECEIVED ANY SIMILAR INFORMATION. DURING OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH FRG EMBASSY OFFICIALS AFTER LEBER'S VISIT, WE WERE TOLD LEBER HAD RECEIVED ASSURANCES FROM OPPOSITION LEADER ECEVIT THAT HE WOULD NOT OPPOSE A CYPRUS SOLUTION. (WE BELIEVE THIS ASSURANCE--WHICH IS ECEVIT'S STANDARD LINE--IS VALID ONLY TO APOINT.) LEBER WAS ALSO TOLD BY FONMIN CAGLAYANGIL, HOWEVER, THAT TWO DEPUTY PRIME MINISTERS OPPOSE A COMPROMISE WITH GREEKS ON THE CYPRUS ISSUE (REF. B).

4. WITH REGARD TO GEHLHOFF'S ASSERTION THAT FRG HAS NOTED MOVES BY GOT TO CONDITION TURKISH PEOPLE TO ACCEPT A COMPROMISE, WE RELUCTANTLY REPORT WE HAVE NOT OBSERVED ANY SUCH MOVES. (THIS IS NOT TO SAY THE TURKISH PUBLIC WOULD NOT SUPPORT ANY COMPROMISE ON CYPRUS. OUR FEELING IS THAT THE GOT'S PRINCIPAL DIFFICULTY IS GETTING DOMESTIC SUPPORT FOR A COMPROMISE WOULD NOT BE WITH PUBLIC OPINION PER SE BUT WITH THE RIVAL POLITICAL PARTIES, WHO SEEM READY TO USE ANY ISSUE AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT.)

5. WE SUSPECT GEHLHOFF OR SOME FRG FONOFF OFFICIAL MAY HAVE ENGAGED IN SOME WISHFUL ANALYSIS WITH WHICH TO ENCOURAGE CLERIDES WHICH IS NOT IN OUR VIEW A NECESSARILY BAD THING.
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MOREOVER, IT S FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW ALTHOGETHER A GOOD THING THAT THE FRG IS WILLING TO INVOLVE ITSELF AS IT HAS IN ATTEMPTING TO FACILITATE A SOLUTION TO THE CYPRUS PROBLEM AND WE BELIEVE FRG SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED IN THIS EFFORT.
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